

SCFC Prevention Dispatch

SC Firewise USA® Community Newsletter

2nd Quarter 2021



Save the Date!

Saturday May 1st, WCPD

Congratulations
to **Woodside Plantation**
on being awarded the
2021 Wildfire Commu-
nity Preparedness Day
Grant! Funding was pro-
vided by State Farm.

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Spring Has Arrived!

For some of us, this is a good thing. The cold and windy days are not the reason why we reside in South Carolina. We love the sunshine and pleasant days! Spring is the time of the year when we can watch new growth bloom and watch the landscapes being painted with brilliant colors. We enjoy being outside and not being too cold or too hot. Yes, spring has sprung but did you know that SC actually has 12 seasons?



The 12 Seasons of South Carolina

1. Winter
2. Fools Spring
3. Second Winter
4. Spring of Deception
5. Third Winter
6. The Pollening
7. Actual Spring
8. Summer
9. Hell's Front Porch
10. False Fall
11. Second Summer
12. Actual Fall



You are here.



NFPA WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS DAY

Wildfires across the United States have cost more than 100 lives and more than \$25 billion in property losses in just the last two years. This is why it's so important to take steps to improve the wildfire safety of your home and community.

WHAT IS WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY?

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day is a national campaign that encourages people and organizations everywhere to come together on a single day to take action to raise awareness and reduce wildfire risks. It is held in the United States and Canada on the first Saturday in May. Given that in-person gatherings are limited or on-hold in many places, this year's Prep Day is focused on what residents can do around their home to help protect against the threat of wildfires.

The idea for this day came from a survey asking middle school students in Texas and Colorado about how they wanted to learn about wildfire. They wanted to be a part of something that was making a difference by improving wildfire safety where they lived. When the program was piloted in 2013 in Colorado, both students and adults were eager to be a part of a day to raise awareness about wildfire safety involving hands-on risk reduction activities. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day is now celebrated across the nation. Click on the banner below or visit www.nfpa.org/Public-Education to learn more.

**GET
INVOLVED**



Saturday, May 1, 2021
WILDFIRE
**COMMUNITY
PREPAREDNESS DAY**

Sponsored by



Savannah Lakes Village earns 15 year Firewise USA standing

Nestled on South Carolinas beautiful Lake Thurmond rest Savannah Lakes Village.

This community has a lot to boast about. The community features two member-owned golf courses, a recreation center, indoor/outdoor pools, community docks and even a \$3 million dollar healthcare facility on site. Its position in the region makes it easily accessible to the upstate and to Georgia which is right across the lake. Surrounded by some 63,000 acres of National Forests and State Parks and a 71,000 acre lake, it's safe to mention that the residents are tucked away nicely. The residents are spread across a sprawling 4,000 acres.



The surrounding lake, forests and parks not only buffer the club but also provide members with a remarkable selection of outdoor recreation opportunities. There is a strong focus on programming that encourages members to enjoy more than 100 miles of hiking and biking trails, kayaking and fantastic fishing and hunting.



A little over 15 years ago, SLV saw a need to keep their beautiful homes and lots secure from wildfire. Leaders reached out to SCFC and soon became the State's first Firewise USA community. Firewise has benefited this community greatly. From chipping days to cleaning vacant lots, the residents of SLV are always working to keep this community safe. Coordinating this is no little task and the leadership at SLV tell us that

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One of the many winding trails that SLV maintains for firebreaks

with so many new people moving in, it's hard to get everyone on-board. The Community told us that they use Firewise not only to help keep its residents safe but also they use it as a service for its homeowners.

Some of the tasks that the residents complete are: chipping days, downed tree removal, vacant lot clean-up and trail maintenance. They also have strict guidance on landscaping and do

not allow any flammable vegetation to be in the home ignition zone (HIZ).

Just one drive through the community and you can see that SLV is indeed a nice place to live. If you have any questions about SLV, reach out to one of the Firewise Coordinators. We also would like to congratulate SLV for 15 years of service to its residents!

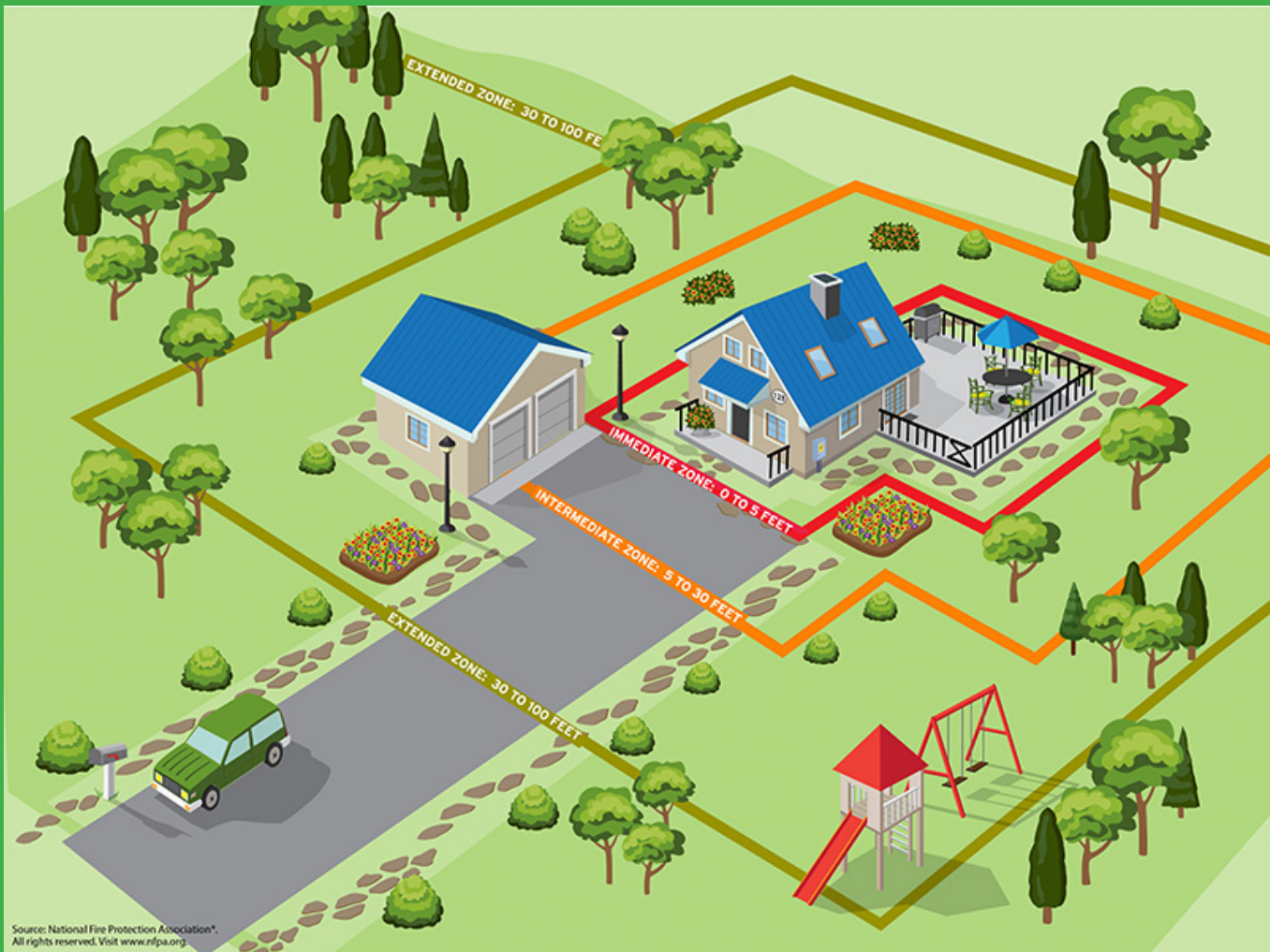


FIREWISE USA®
Residents reducing wildfire risks

Pictured:

Mr. Forrest Ferqueron, Director of Community Services and Mrs. Stacie Green, ACC Inspector/Administrator

Defending the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ)



Research shows there are proven methods for preparing properties for withstanding the devastating impacts of a wildfire. This Prep Day, you have the power to protect the part of the community that means the most to you and your family by eliminating vulnerabilities in the HIZ, particularly the immediate 5-foot zone around your residence. Whether it's replacing wood chips with gravel or reimagining your entire landscape design, what you do on Saturday, May 1, really matters. Be ready to make a difference in helping to avoid loss and tragedy with information and resources from NFPA®.

Soak up Natural Vitamin-D while Conducting Fire Prevention Activities in the Landscape

Another wet and long winter season may have created the doldrums for you and your family.

The good news is spring is finally here! As you head to the outdoors to shake off those winter doldrums, spend some time in your yard to clean-up available fuels near your home and the surrounding area. A landscape that gives a building the best chance for surviving a wildfire is one that provides defensible space.

Fires need fuel, oxygen, and heat to burn. Defensible space landscapes are low in fuel, keeping the fire far enough away that fire-fighters have a chance to defend the building. To ensure you have adequate defensible space implement the following:

1. On larger lots, maintain a fuel break of low-growing plants 30 to 70 feet out from buildings. Such fuel breaks act as a buffer between the manicured landscape near the home and the adjacent wildlands.



2. Rake up leaves and twigs. Remove plant litter (dead leaves, twigs, etc.) that accumulates under trees and shrubs to reduce fuel loads. Tree litter that accumulates on roofs and in gutters should also be removed regularly. Large amounts of litter can accumulate on lower branches of trees and shrubs and should be removed. Removal of heavy litter accumulations in adjacent wildland areas also should be done if possible. Removed litter should be placed in an approved landfill. It should not be piled on the property or in adjacent woodlands.

3. Prune tree branches. Prune branches up to ten to twenty feet above the ground on large trees to prevent low fires from reaching the tree crowns.

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GET INVOLVED



Saturday, May 1, 2021 WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY

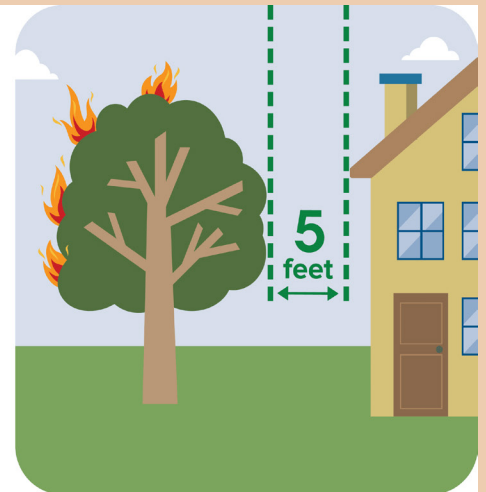
Sponsored by



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5. Prune tree branches. Prune branches up to ten to twenty feet above the ground on large trees to prevent low fires from reaching the tree crowns.



6. Thin dense tree groups. Though the grouping of trees is normally a good landscaping technique, in fire-prone areas it can be hazardous. Thinning these groups will slow the spread of fire.

7. Remove firewood and other combustible materials from around buildings. Firewood should be stored on the outside edge of your defensible space.

8. Make sure firefighters can reach all parts of your property. Place fences, trees, retaining walls, etc. so that they don't restrict firefighting equipment access.

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9. Choose landscape plants that are less flammable. All plants will burn if a fire is severe enough however some plants are more fire-prone than others. Conifers such as pines and spruces tend to be fairly flammable, while many broadleaved trees are fairly fire resistant.



10. Cooperate with neighbors to provide large defensible spaces. A thirty foot wide clear space around a home may not be adequate in a severe fire, especially if neighboring properties have not been well-designed or maintained. Neighbors should cooperate to reduce fire risk by having good defensible spaces that join one another.

11. Check your landscape monthly. Maintenance is a never-ending task. Inspect landscapes monthly and attend to problem situations before they become serious hazards.

Though a thirty foot wide defensible space around a home is generally adequate, maintain the additional fuel break at 30 to 70 feet if possible. This becomes especially important when local conditions may create severe fires. Houses located high on steep slopes will need wider clear spaces to protect from fires burning up-hill. Local wind conditions may also warrant wider cleared areas.

These techniques will not guarantee complete fire safety. However, fire smart landscaping can greatly increase a home's chances of survival if a fire occurs.



SC Firewise USA™ Community Housekeeping

2021 Grant

All of the 2021 grant applications have been processed and the approval letters were mailed to the community leaders in late November 2020. I guess that the early part of 2021 is still in the 2020 funk, because I have received multiple emails from some of you wondering the status of your 2021 grants. I have also received several of the letters that I personally mailed to different communities returned to me saying that those letters could not be delivered. So in an effort to make sure that you are aware of your 2021 grant status, if you sent in an application and never received the approval letter, please contact me for that information. I will be glad to email you a copy of your approval letter so that you can know the status of your 2021 grant allocations.

Firewise USA™ 2020 Renewals

There were some of our communities that did not complete the renewal process through the NFPA Firewise portal. A member of our team will be reaching out to those of you that did not renew to see if we can assist you with getting that updated if you wish to stay in the program. For those of you that did not renew and would like to do so, there is still time for you to renew your Firewise USA™ status without submitting a full application. Please contact a member of our WUI Team and we will be glad to assist you in the process and get your community back in Good Standing in the program.

Community Leader Changes and Updates

Several of our communities have changed their community leaders over the last few months. This is a common practice and we are aware this happens from time to time. We do ask that if this change is not a short term change that you please go into the Firewise USA™ online portal and update this information under your communities account. This will help us and the NFPA keep all of the emails and information passing to the correct individuals. We would also ask that you send an email to our team so that we may keep our email list updated.

On this same note, our emails typically go out to the community leaders only for each community. I have had some requests for other Firewise board members to be added to my email list so that multiple people from the community receive emails. If you would like to add members of your Firewise board onto our email list, please contact us with those requests and we will update our contact lists.

Site Visits from our WUI Team

I know that we are all ready to get back to “normal”. I am happy to report that we are on our way back to something a lot closer to normal. We are back to doing site visits and meetings with smaller groups of folks. Please contact us for any requests of site visits and we will try and plan to keep it as safe and productive as possible.

Thanks, Drake Carroll

Prescribed Fire As A Mitigation Tool

Prescribed fire is one of many fuel reduction treatments used to remove or reduce dense vegetation that is fuel for wildfires. Dense vegetation can create intense fires that burn quickly and endanger nearby communities.

By safely reducing excessive amounts of brush, shrubs, and trees, encouraging the new growth of native vegetation, and maintaining the many plant and animal species whose habitats depend on periodic fire, prescribed burning helps reduce the catastrophic damage of wildfire on our lands and surrounding communities. Wildfires that burn in areas where fuels have been reduced by prescribed fire cause less damage and are much easier to control.

It is also in the wildland urban interface that prescribed fire, when utilized judiciously can have the biggest impact on protecting our communities and our ecosystems from catastrophic wildfire. Just like landowners are responsible for managing their lands, homeowners have a responsibility to manage their property and homes in a way that is fire resistant and compatible with the fire adapted ecosystems in which we reside.

State forestry agencies work with community leaders (county officials, city managers/planners, fire chiefs, emergency management coordinators and home owner associations) to plan and implement community wildfire preparedness plans and programs to help withstand wildfire and to conduct wildfire mitigation work in identified high-risk areas.



SC WUI/Prevention Calendar

Upcoming Events to Look Out For

2021 Community Grant Year

2021 Grant funding is in full swing!

April 22, 2021 is Earth Day

The first Earth Day was in 1970 and this announcement gave a voice to public consciousness about the state of the planet. Over the years and decades, the focus of Earth Day may have shifted for certain groups, but ultimately the goal is to simply acknowledge the earth and promote good stewardship toward our planet. Earth Day from a wildfire prevention stand point is a great day to promote the importance of wildfire mitigation efforts. If you are going to plant a tree, plant a tree with wildfire prevention in mind.

May 1st, Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

It is held in the United States and Canada on the first Saturday in May. Given that in-person gatherings are limited or on-hold in many places, this year's Prep Day is focused on what residents can do on and around their home to help protect against the threat of wildfires. Find out more [HERE](#). **FLOOD US WITH PHOTOS FROM YOUR EVENT!**

Next Newsletter

Our next newsletter should be published in early July. If you have questions, comments or desired topics please contact a member of our WUI Team and submit those to us by the early part of June.

We're looking for your help!

Help us make this Newsletter better by

- Sending in photos of events and work being done around your community
- Letting us know if you have an event planned or completed that you would like to feature in the newsletter
- Giving us feedback

Drop us an email or call!

SCFC Offers Services!

Services Offered Include:

- Fire Break Plowing
- Prescribed Fire Application
- Water Bar Construction
- Timber Marking
- Insect and Disease Lab

Equipment Available for Rent:

- Drum Chopper
- Tree Planters



Call us today!

**To rent or procure any equipment and/or services listed, call
your nearest South Carolina Forestry Commission office or
(803) 896-8800**

